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# Funding agencies wasting millions in the name of Traditional Healers, not for them.

- Posted by [Pankaj Oudhia](#) on April 27, 2012 at 8:40
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## Excerpts from my Jungle Diaries (April 2012 onwards) Part-4

(In continuation of Part-3)

“Semal is very useful for farmers. If you plant or allow it in periphery it will attract large number of birds in early summer. In our area this is time when fields are empty. The birds play vital role in management of insects. They consume weed seeds and as result we get less weeds as well as insects

in next cropping season. We use Semal based Traditional Formulations to manage pest in rice crop specially the rice we grow for our family. We never apply modern chemicals in this rice. Semal like indigenous trees help in ecofriendly management of pest.” I remembered my interactions with the rice farmers of Sirkatti Ashram region. The most important information they shared was about Hanuman Langur.

Due to decreasing forest cover and increasing human interference inside forest these creatures are migrating towards farmer's fields and their villages. They have changed their food habits and now by consuming almost every thing they have started surviving in all types of harsh conditions. According to senior farmers in early days Hanuman Langur were preferring to keep distance with Linseed and Custard Apple like plants but now they have started taking interest in Linseed crop and Custard Apple Orchard. The farmers of Sirkatti region informed that as Semal trees are full of spines (rather prickles) Hanuman Langur not prefers it as shelter. They select the crop fields having large number of safe trees so that they can escape to safe place in case of any kind of danger. Farmers allow Semal and remove all other trees from crop fields and surroundings. They claim that it helps in reducing the menace of Hanuman Langur.

This information is vital and important because I got it during field surveys. “We have seen Semal trees at many locations and also interacted with the natives but never noted it. How you extract such information?” This is one of the most frequently asked questions. It was asked again when I was invited to join HIFA-2015. I accepted their invitation as they were interested in discussion on Traditional Healing. I gave introduction to the group with link of scribd.com (<http://www.scribd.com/pankajoudhia>) where over 2000 documents mostly on Management of Diabetes through Traditional Healing Methods were available. I present these documents as documents of plus 10 GB size and avoid in terms of pages. The members responded positively.



[Picture by Pankaj Oudhia]

One of founders/moderators (?) sent a message that there are so many Traditional Healers in Africa and he has worked with them but failed to “Extract” any vital information. He was interested in my methods of knowledge extraction. Without waiting for my reply he introduced famous Traditional Healer of Africa through mail and motivated me to interact with him so that the founder/moderator member can get idea of extraction method. This was in progress outside the group.

If you really want to learn from the Traditional Healers then you have to remove the idea of extraction from your dictionary. There is no extraction method. Live with them without interfering their lives and share the information you have collected from the other Healers. In return if they feel that you are suitable candidate for keeping the Traditional Knowledge for future generation they will share it with you. In my life I interacted with thousands of Traditional Healers and always shared my knowledge with them. They enriched my knowledge and I enriched them. It is two way process and not possible in time bound projects with lots of limitations. You must join the life time project without much expectation. It is difficult path but I can assure you that you can gain a lot.

So, I refused to extract the Traditional Healer of Africa for that gentleman. Very soon they started moderating and rejecting my mails to the group. I complained but it seemed that there formal requirement of general discussion on Traditional Healing was over. Very soon I left the group.



[Picture by Pankaj Oudhia]

“We are training the Traditional Healers and after completion of training providing certificate to them.” One of the senior Forest officers was sharing this information with much proud. Training of Traditional Healers? Training of Healers practicing generation old Traditional Knowledge living in forest by the forest officers having less access to forest!!!! The Traditional Healers can train the Forest Officers but in Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh the knowledge river is flowing in opposite direction.

“What type of Training?” I asked.

“We are helping them in identification of plants, making herbarium sheets and informing about herbs available in published literature and so on.” The officer said. It seems that they have no idea about even the “T” of Traditional Healers. Whatever the published literature of herbs is available is based on the knowledge of ancient and modern Traditional Healers. Then what is the meaning of telling them about their knowledge? And what the Healers can do with the Herbarium sheets? I observed bundles of such sheets as neglected material with the Healers dumped in their houses. After getting training most of the Healers are forced to sell the commercial products instead of practicing their original formulations.

You can understand the big money game in this exercise. Millions have been invested in this wrong plan; The Healers are acting as sales agent of forest department. For the personal gain the department is killing a generation of Traditional Healers. As mentioned earlier, the authorities are presenting the Trained Healers as show piece. In Central University where I was invited for guest lecture these trained Healers were there. The speakers were talking in English ignoring the fact that the Healers are not aware of this language. I decided to speak in their own language and about their real contribution in the field of Traditional Healing. These Healers were honored later but they were not allowed to speak in the workshop. Only few of them were shared the views in limited time frame.

During the interactions the Healers informed that they routinely travel for such programs and it affects their Traditional Healing. In most of the cases they are not paid and in the name of their presence the organizers extract huge fund from the funding agencies.

“Whether Training Certificate allows them legally to practice their knowledge?” I asked to the concerned officer.

“No. still their practice is illegal.” He relied.

“Then why your department is not working to change the law of this country. Let’s do it for them.” I tried to motivate him.

”If they get the licensee then they will never come to our department.” He said the bitter truth finally. (contd.)

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